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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8573
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC//NSC//
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/18/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: ANOTHER SENIOR DAWA FIGURE QUESTIONS THE MODERATE
FRONT

REF: A. BAGHDAD 4611
[B](#). BAGHDAD 4609
[C](#). BAGHDAD 4553

Classified By: Political Counselor Margaret Scobey for reasons 1.4 (b)
and (d).

[1](#). (S) Falih al-Fiyadh, a senior Dawa figure who is a member of the Council of Representatives (CoR) and of the High Commission for National Reconciliation, told PolCouns December 17 that he had serious doubts about the efficacy and utility of and the intentions behind the emerging moderate front. He characterized the idea that the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) and SCIRI would work together in a coalition as a "dream." He also questioned how the Kurds could be considered moderate given their "commitment to leaving Iraq" and their "extreme position" on issues like Kirkuk. Pointing to the regions formation law as an example of where legislation moved forward without a formal moderate front, he questioned the need for such a front and its motivations. According to al-Fiyadh, one of the purposes of the moderate front cited by its initiators is to isolate extreme groups like the Sadrists, yet, he pointed out, the regions formation bill passed without a formal moderate front. "The true reasons for forming this front are different from what they are saying," he continued. (Note: PolOffs believe he may have been implying that real reason is to wrest power away from Prime Minister Maliki. End note.) Al-Fiyadh said that the Prime Minister "could not say no" to the idea of the moderate front but cautioned that Dawa as a party had not yet entered it.

[2](#). (S) Comment: Dawa leaders Ali al-Adeeb and Haider al-Abbadi and PM insider Sami al-Askari have each questioned the moderate front concept (refs A and C). The PM's remarks at the December 16 press conference, where leaders from SCIRI, IIP, KDP, PUK, and Dawa (i.e., the PM) announced the front's creation (while noting the need for further negotiation; ref B), show that he is careful to portray the front in open, general, and inclusive language, as "a continuation of the national reconciliation process" that is "open to those who wish to be true partners." Further negotiations on the shape of the front, in which Ali al-Adeeb is designated to participate, will reveal the extent to which Dawa responds to the Prime Minister's involvement in this initiative. End comment.
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